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TRANSPORTATION AND
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OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT
REFORM COMMITTEE

SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN, CONTRACTING AND
TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

November 20, 2007

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The Honorable Nancy A. Nord
Acting Chairman
Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Ms. Nord,

I am writing to you, along with the undersigned residents of Iowa's First District, to urge you to take aggressive action to protect American children from hazardous toys.

Like many Americans, we are very alarmed that millions of Chinese-manufactured toys containing loose parts, dangerous levels of lead, and other chemicals hazardous to children, have been recalled in recent months. These numerous recalls raise serious concerns about the safety of toys imported into the United States, and about the processes and procedures which are in place at the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to protect our children from dangerous products.

We believe that you and the CPSC must hold toys imported from China and other foreign countries to the same high safety standards as toys produced in the United States. Given China's growing role as a major supplier of toys to the United States, and the number of Chinese-produced toys which have been recalled in recent months, we request that you immediately take action to improve the CPSC's evaluation and regulation of toys produced there and brought into our country. The role of the Commission in evaluating and regulating these products is especially critical given the lack of inspections, lax consumer protection laws, and overall weak regulatory environment in China.

We are also very concerned by reports that staffing levels at the CPSC have decreased to the lowest level in history while the number of products the CPSC has jurisdiction over has grown, and that standards at the CPSC have been lowered. In addition, reports that you have taken dozens of trips at the expense of the toy, appliance, and children's furniture industries – which you are responsible for regulating – raise serious questions about your impartiality and ability to objectively and effectively evaluate the safety of their products.

Nothing is more important than the health and safety of American children, and American parents deserve to know that the toys they buy for their children will not be harmful to them. It is critical that you and the CPSC be vigilant and proactive in protecting our children from unsafe toys.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to hearing from you soon about the immediate steps that you are taking to restore the public's trust in the CPSC and to ensure that toys purchased by American families are safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bruce Braley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bruce Braley
Member of Congress